



# SOUTHEAST NEWS

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## Two Speakers Keynote 26th Annual Meeting

A nationally recognized Biblical scholar and a retired homeland ministries board executive are the keynote speakers for the 26th Annual Meeting of the Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ on June 12-14 in Atlanta, GA.

The theme of the Annual Meeting is "Behold, I Am Doing a New Thing," drawn from Isaiah 43:12-21, with a subtheme of "The Church in the South."

More than 200 delegates, clergy and visitors are expected from churches in the Conference for the three-day annual session which will be at the downtown First Congregational Church, UCC, and the close by Ramada Inn.

Keynote speakers and worship leaders are Dr. Walter Brueggemann, Professor of Old Testament at Columbia Theological Seminary in Atlanta, GA, and the Rev. Charles Shelby Rooks, who recently retired as executive vice president of the United Church Board of Homeland Ministries.

This year's annual meeting will have four special features.

The first will be five forums on topical social problems of concern to the church held at different locations in Atlanta on Saturday afternoon.

The forums include sessions on National Health Care; Housing and the Homelessness; the Aging, Elderly and Retirement; Issues of Sexuality; and Family Life: Stability and Trends.

Another new feature will be the introduction of the "Ritual of Living Heritage," an annual liturgy presented as part of Annual Meeting worship which is meant to establish a sense of tradition and closeness within the Conference.

A third will be the formal introduction of "Speak Out," a time set aside on Sunday morning for delegates and visitors to address issues and concerns in the church, Conference and wider society that concern them.

The final new feature will be the Mission Hour, which will follow "Speak Out" on Sunday morning. The speaker this year will be Martha Mensendiek, a recently returned UCC missionary to Japan.

Among two resolutions being presented to the Annual Meeting will be one from the East Alabama-West Georgia Association asking that the Conference refute the 18th General Synod's stand on gays, lesbians and bisexuals in the ministry of the church.

The second is a resolution calling for national leaders to amend the United Nations charter to include a Bill of Rights based on worldwide environment issues.

Delegates and clergy also will be asked to approve a \$250,000 budget for 1993, a 6% increase over the 1992 budget, which was revised downward by the Board of Directors earlier this year because contributions from Our Church's Wider Mission did not rise as much as expected.

Another financial proposal will involve the participation of the Southeast Conference in "Make A Difference," a three-year national capital campaign for the United Church of Christ, in 1994.

In addition, the Annual Meeting will vote on a new moderator and vice moderator. Dr. Erna Bryant and Richard Sales, respectively, have been nominated for the positions. In addition, 22 persons have been nominated to fill other Conference offices, and various board, commission and committee positions.

The meeting will end with separate worship services at eight UCC churches in the Atlanta area, including at First Congregational Church, where much of the meeting will be held.

## **Churches Grow Again In 1991**

Membership of UCC churches in the Southeast Conference increased for the fourth straight year, according to the 1991 Southeast Conference Database.

Based on yearbook information for reporting churches, the database showed that churches overall gained 81 people, a total increase of about 1% over the previous year.

Since the database records began in 1988, membership in 76 churches of the Conference has gone up by 4%, or by 220 persons, to 8,045 persons.

"Since 1989, when the Conference voted to make church development and evangelism its top priority, many of our churches have responded wonderfully," said the Rev. Roger D. Knight, Conference Minister of the Southeast Conference.

The church with greatest gain was First Congregational Church of Atlanta, whose membership rose by 35 people. The second and third top gaining were Jones Chapel Congregational Christian Church of Woodbury, GA (27 members), and Circular Congregational Church of Charleston, SC (21 members). Pine Forest Congregational Christian Church of Lanett, AL, was fourth with 15 members.

In 1991, 23 churches reported membership gains. Only 14 reported losses.

The Georgia-South Carolina Association led in membership growth, with about a 3% increase. The East Alabama-West Georgia Association posted about a 1% gain. Churches in both the Alabama-Tennessee and South Alabama-Northwest Florida associations slipped in members.

Overall, Conference churches rose in all statistical categories: Church Finances; Stewardship Giving; OCWM Giving; Worship Attendance; and Church School Enrollment.

Despite the national recession, most of the 45 reporting churches did relatively well financially. The database said the effects of the recession on churches appeared to be localized in several urban and town churches in Tennessee and Alabama, two states where unemployment is highest.

Overall church finances rose by 5%, bolstered by increased congregational stewardship giving (which rose 4%). Churches in turn increased their contributions to Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) by 4%.

According to the database, the statistics showed continued improvement in worship attendance and church school enrollment. The gain was 4% for both average weekly worship attendance and the number of people enrolled in Bible study, Christian education or church school classes.

In 1991, the average church had 106 members; a budget of \$53,305; congregational giving of \$57,917; 67 people in worship; and 39 people in church school. Per capita OCWM giving was \$21.59.

## **Summer Camp Week at Children's Harbor**

The Christian Education Commission of the Southeast Conference has reserved a week for a Conference-wide youth camping experience in July.

The weeklong camping experience is scheduled to be held at the Children's Harbor near Alexander City, AL, on July 25-31. The Children's Harbor is a church-related facility that provides interim care for youth in special situations. It has camping facilities, in addition.

For further information, call the chair of the Commission, Herb Young, at (205) 756-2335 or (205) 756-6625, or the Conference office at (404) 633-5655.

## **CONFERENCE COMMENTS:**

### **Understanding Old Stories in Fresh Ways**

The Evangelism Institutes session just concluded. For three years the Southeast Conference, in conjunction with the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, has provided an experience for local church teams to share the evangel in and beyond their own congregation.

Various leaders within our Conference, as well as keynoters Reuben Sheares, Walt Brueggemann, and Jackie McMakin, and Alan Johnson and Marti McMane of the UCBHM, have presented the evangelism jewel through which light has refracted prisms of various bright hues of understandings.

Isn't it strange that the heart of our Christian faith, the good news (evangel), has to be programmed with good techniques in order to try to convince or entice church members that evangelization is central to each church's life! Yet churches without it lack vitality.

A learning shared at the Institute: the one common factor within churches of the United Church of Christ that were growing—aside from facilities, worship and preaching, outreach projects, study groups, etc.—was that evangelism was at the heart of their life.

That is not button-holing on the street-corner, or talking religion to everyone you meet; it is a sharing with others that life is different with God's love made

known in Jesus, which gets expressed in many and varied ways. Programs introduce but cannot capture the evangel.

In congregational worship, recently it struck me that the overfamiliarity of the Biblical stories may actually preclude our hearing the fresh, radical gospel.

As someone said, "I read the story in the Gospels many times but just now (in my sharing at the Evangelism Institute) it was as if I heard it for the first time." Surely, that is God's word coming through the Biblical witness, truly in a convicting and redeeming way.

Fred Craddock in his book "Overhearing the Gospel" challenges preachers to introduce Christ in fresh ways, quoting philosopher Soren Kirkegaard (as a reminder to us):

"There is no lack of information in a Christian land; something else is lacking, and this is a something which the one person cannot directly communicate to the other."

When I write this, Easter is nearly here. I pray that the familiarity of the stories and the traditional preparations will not get in the way of our hearing God's Word for all the world in Jesus' death and resurrection. It is a matter of life and death, friends, for you and your church.

Shalom,  
Roger Knight

## UPCOMING

The Southeast Conference is sponsoring a work-visit to Ghana on Jan. 31-Feb. 13, 1993, in cooperation with the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Ghana.

The two-week program in the West African nation will include participation in a work project, worship in EPC churches, and visits to missions of the EPC and the United Church of Christ.

Work visit leaders will be Tim Morrison, pastor of Pilgrimage United Church of Christ in Marietta, GA, and a former missionary to Ghana; and Bill Bourdon of Pilgrim Park, IL.

Cost of the program is \$2,500, including air fare, meals, lodging and all travel. For information, contact Rev. Morrison at (404) 917-0007, or at Pilgrimage Church, 3755 Sandy Plains Road, Marietta, GA 30066.

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A service to dedicate renovations and a new steeple at historic First Congregational Church, UCC, of Savannah, GA, will be led by Dr. Robert Burt, general secretary of the Division for Church Development and Evangelism of the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries. The service will be held Sunday, May 31.

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Tales of the Heart, a global education training event, will be held May 28-31, at Simpsonwood Conference Center in Atlanta. The event is sponsored by the Global Education Committee of Church World Service and Witness, in which the United Church of Christ participates. Led by Tales of the Heart authors, Loretta Whalen and Tom Hampson, the program costs \$200. For information, contact Barbara Ober, Church of the Brethren, at (708) 742-5100.

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Mike Downs, Secretary for Local Church Building, will be the guest preacher at Gwinnett Community Church, UCC, of Lilburn, GA, on Sunday, June 7. The newly elected staff member of the Division of Evangelism and Church Development of UCBHM will hold a series of meetings June 5-6 with Conference and association committees on church development sites and projects.

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Vanderbilt Divinity School and the Vanderbilt University for Clinical and Research Ethics are holding a Clinical Ethics Training Program for clergy at the Scarritt-Bennett Conference Center in Nashville, TN, on July 27-31. Costing \$160, the three-day program offers three continuing education credits. Call Gabriele Wood at (615) 322-2252 for information.

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The recently elected Executive Vice President of the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, Dr. Thomas E. Dipko, will be the resource leader for the annual planning meeting of the Board of Directors of the Southeast Conference on Friday and Saturday, Aug. 28-29 Board of Directors' Planning Retreat at an unannounced location. Dr. Dipko took office earlier this year, replacing the Rev. Shelby Rooks, who has retired.

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Dr. Thomas Dipko also will be leader of the Clergy-Spouse Retreat of the Southeast Conference on Sunday through Tuesday, Aug. 30-Sept. 1 at Shocco Springs Conference Center, Talladega, AL.

The retreat, open to ordained, licensed, and non-parish clergy, will focus on the "office of ministry" to which clergy are called in the life of the church.

Also taking part will be the Rev. Robert Johnson, the nominated chairperson of the Conference's Church and Ministry Commission.

A member of First Congregational Church, UCC, of Atlanta, Rev. Johnson is the former pastor of St. Alban's United Church of Christ in New York City. Dr.

Dipko is the former pastor of a UCC church in Framingham, MA, and wrote part of the *UCC Book of Worship*. For information, call the Conference at (404) 633-5655.

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Schedules for the Annual Meetings of the Southeast Conference's four associations have been set for this fall.

At the Alabama-Tennessee Association meeting on Sept. 11-12 at Pleasant Hill Community Church in Pleasant Hill, TN, Dr. Jon P. Gunnemann, professor of social ethics at the Candler School of Theology, Atlanta, and a UCC minister, is the keynote speaker.

At the Georgia-South Carolina Association meeting on Sept. 18-19 in Charleston, SC, the keynote speaker will be the Rev. Don Gall, Conference Minister of the Iowa Conference, a partner conference with the Southeast Conference.

The South Alabama-Northwest Florida Association will meet on Oct. 7 at Antioch Congregational Christian Church, Andalusia, AL, and the East Alabama-West Georgia Association will meet Oct. 17 at an unannounced place. Speakers have not been announced.

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OTHER UPCOMING: Dr. Flora Wilson Bridges will be the keynote speaker at the Women's Retreat of the Southeast Conference on Oct. 9-11 in Monteagle, TN ... Conference commissions will gather Nov. 5-6 for the annual program planning session.

## **Morgan-Scott Says Thank You**

Greetings:

Your check of \$1,000 [for the Garden Project from the Southeast Conference] was a nice surprise and very much appreciated. It is not often we receive gifts of this magnitude. It will go a long way in meeting the needs of those we serve.

We had our Good Earth garden program last week and we served about 185 families within two counties ...

We continue ... home repairs for the elderly, low-income and handicapped of the two counties ...

Again, thank you for your faith and support. God bless you and we ask for your prayers.

Ann Smith

Secretary, Morgan-Scott Project For Cooperative Christian Concerns

## **Two Major Figures to Lead Worship**

Two major figures in the United Church of Christ will be keynote speakers and worship leaders for the 26th Annual Meeting of the Southeast Conference on June 12-14.

Walter Brueggemann, Professor of Old Testament at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, GA, and Charles Shelby Rooks, recently retired executive vice president of the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, will highlight the three-day meeting in Atlanta.

Dr. Brueggemann will lead worship on Friday evening, June 12, and Rev. Rooks will speak and lead worship on Saturday morning, June 13.

Dr. Brueggemann, who joined the faculty of Columbia in 1986, is an ordained United Church of Christ minister. Rev. Rooks retired after eight years of service as head of UCBHM earlier this year.

(Brueggemann) is the author of seven books and commentaries on the Old Testament, as well as numerous articles. Dr. Brueggemann's most recent volume is "Interpretation and Obedience: From Faithful Reading to Faithful Living," published by Fortress Press.

Born in Tilden, NE, he is a graduate of Elmhurst College and Eden Theological Seminary. He holds doctorates from Union Theological Seminary, St. Louis University, DePauw University and Virginia Theological Seminary.

Previously he was visiting lecturer at Cambridge University and on the staff of Eden Theological Seminary, a closely related UCC seminary in Webster Groves, MO.

Rev. Rooks, a resident of New Jersey, was born in Beaufort, NC. Ordained in the National Baptist Convention USA, Inc., he gained standing in the Congregational Christian Churches in 1953.

Before becoming executive vice president of the home board, he served four churches in New York, Washington, DC, and Maryland, and was president of the Chicago Theological Seminary from 1974-1984. He also was lecturer at Harvard Divinity School in 1976.

He is a graduate of Virginia State University and Union Theological Seminary, and holds doctorates from the College of Wooster; Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta; Virginia Union University, and Dillard University.

## **Five Forums To Explore Key Issues**

Five forums exploring issues important to our lives and our communities today will be a highlight of the Annual Meeting on Saturday afternoon.

The forums, which will be held at 2:30 p.m. Saturday at the Ramada Hotel, will be led by church-related leaders in each subject. The subjects are National Health Care; Housing and Homelessness; Aging, Elderly and Retirement; Issues of Sexuality; and Family Life Stability and Trends.

These are the five forums:

National Health Care: An issue of vital public debate today, National Health Care was voted a priority by the 18th General Synod in 1991. Dr. Dick Braun, a practicing physician and a member of United Christian Church, UCC, of Crossville, TN, will need the discussion on proposed legislation and options.

Housing and Homelessness: This continuing public issue has many aspects. The complexities of housing, and family and economic changes, have heightened factors which affect the plight of people, including homelessness. The Rev. Houston Wheeler, a UCC minister, works with tenants of the Martin Street Housing Project in Atlanta, which is located next door to the proposed Olympic stadium.

The Aging, Elderly and Retirement: Staying lively and being able to participate in community with others includes a number of concerns. The church's role in fruitful living is a serious consideration as an increasingly larger share of our society reaches their senior years. The program will be led by Pam Rapp, a registered nurse, and director of Plymouth Harbor, an adult care program begun last year by Central Congregational United Church of Christ in Atlanta.

Issues of Sexuality: An emotionally charged topic, perspectives on sexuality will be shared. The resolutions of the East Alabama-West Georgia Association and the General Synod will precipitate a discussion of lifestyles, human situations and the relation to faith. Kathryn Cartledge will lead the discussion.

Family Life Stability and Trends: Led by Leona Martin, the forum will explore the pressures and expectations of our times that impact families. Defining family life itself, then discovering understandings and resources for coping and living sanely, will be the main agenda.

## **Schedule for the 26th Annual Meeting**

### **Friday, June 12**

2:00 p.m.	Display setup (Ramada Inn)
2:30 p.m.	Board of Directors Meeting (Ramada)
4:00-9 p.m.	Registration (Ramada)
5:00 p.m.	Light Buffet Supper (First Church)
6:45 p.m.	Annual Meeting opening activities (First Church)
7:00 p.m.	Call to Order (First Church)
	Initial Business
	Worship & Prayer
7:45 p.m.	Festive Worship Service (First Church)
	All Atlanta churches choir
	Preacher: Walter Brueggemann
9:20 p.m.	Reception (First Church)
	Youth Pop-In at Downtown YMCA

### **Saturday, June 13**

7:00 a.m.	Continental Breakfast (First Church)
7:30-11 a.m.	Registration (Ramada)



8:15 a.m.	Worship and Prayer (First Church) Community Singing Announcements
8:45 a.m.	State of the Conference Address (First Church) by Roger Knight Business
10:00 a.m.	Hearings
11:00 a.m.	Worship (First Church) Keynote by Dr. Shelby Rooks Liturgy of Living Heritage
12:30-2 p.m.	Banquet (Ramada) Recognitions Visions '91 Celebration
2:00 p.m.	Break
2:30 p.m.	Forums (various locations)
4:30-6:00 p.m.	Business (First Church)
6:00 p.m.	Worship (First Church) Communion Installation of officers Evening: Optional activities and free time

### **Sunday, June 14**

7:00 a.m.	Continental Breakfast (First Church)
8:00-9:30 a.m.	Speak Out Time (First Church) Mission Time (Martha Mensendiek)
9:00 a.m.	Board of Directors Meeting (First Church) Worship in Atlanta Area UCC Churches

## **Developing Leaders Key to Growth of Our Conference: Conference Minister**

Like the people of Israel who were led out of Egypt, through adversity, and journeyed towards a new tomorrow in the Promised Land, we of the Southeast Conference are called to live as People of Promise for God's tomorrow in this society. Daily I am reminded that our reliance is on God, and that God in Christ does lead us!

Like the early disciples who followed Jesus' invitation to establish a grace-filled community of faith and a just society, we of the Southeast Conference are called to build up the Body of Christ in local churches and in reconciliation ministries. Disciples are followers; disciples minister. The term "leader" is not used in the New Testament; "minister" is the term referring to those faithful who can be counted on to be leaders. Developing leaders/ministers who are disciples of Jesus is simply key to our life and witness as a Conference.

With this foundational faith perspective I report to you, after 3.5 years being in your midst, on our Conference.

1. To Be a Family. Our divergent backgrounds, practices and expectations have too often overshadowed the unity of our calling and identity. Sometimes we act like mini-conferences or behave more like a dysfunctional family. However, The Table is set before us by the Lord, and we are invited to be a new kind of family. It became apparent this year that we lack continuity from generation to generation. (The new Heritage Committee seeks to recapture the historical tales which characterize us as a place of history, to awaken our destiny as history-making people.) It is important for us to create rituals and traditions that give continuity to the past and the future into which we are called.

2. Cultural Influence and Faith. News stories tell of the struggles of religious institutions today, and suspicion effects the support of our wider church life. Surely the church exists within its culture, but the church can mimic or can be held captive by the culture. We used to assume that the society was friendly to the church; but now the church surely is to be the transformer of society. To be, as Paul said, to be “in but not of the world.” Friends, there is no escape from doing battle with principalities and powers, forces that simply “do people in.”

3. VISIONS '91. What a great step forward for the future!—now at \$182,000. One leader commented, “God will do this.” AMEN! But there are some members and churches that have not given: why not make a commitment and help reach the Challenge Goal!

4. OCWM. We constantly increase slightly our OCWM, but not to what we anticipated. So we live within our means—sadly as some critical resourcing, training, and programs get cut, but glad to continue to pursue the mission together. It hurts to see our mission personnel “cut” because of the shortness of funds; however, the main battle is with hearts, minds and pocketbooks of members—and that is not a new or easy task.

5. Conference Center and Offices. We had anticipated having by this time a Conference Center with administrative offices for training and resourcing churches and leaders. The Location Committee and Board of Directors continue to pursue appropriate facilities for visibility, accessibility and good functioning of the SEC's offices.

6. Programming and Responsibility. There are a multiplicity and variety of activities going out at various times in the Conference. Yet some programs lack participation and in some cases too few are carrying the leadership load. The Program Committee's and Board's action to change the program year so that commission chairpersons will overlap for six months, and an annual program planning event in November, should help considerably.

7. Long-range preparations should be made now that enable us to include ecumenical relationships and partnerships first with the Disciples of Christ, then COCU, and others.

In summary, we are moving ahead deliberately on God's call to strengthen, grow and establish churches here in the Southeast. Consistently the administrative,

financial and organizational elements are more clear and coherent. We all would like to run more effectively. Frankly the geographical distances are very difficult; we are a small-membership Conference. We do not have the resources and people-power to do all that we desire. A friend counseled recently that a long-range view is necessary: building solidly, defining expectations, holding to accountability, developing and supporting courageous leadership, liturgically celebrating continuities, and offering all for God's blessings.

Building begins with relying on those who are committed; it is moving "from strength to strength." When a church is "down," we need to see that it didn't get that way in a day, or a year—it was a decade or generation; similarly, a major turn-around is long-term, and never happens without strong, passionate leadership. Even in saying that we all know there are forces inherent in group or organizational life that are more pervasive than individuals' resolve. At times those forces need to be named and confronted, and major change occur, before the forces of new life can result. All of that is moving from survival to being Good News bearers today. All of the Conference's activities—administrative, program, organizational—are intended for proclaiming the Gospel and supporting inclusive communities of faith. I count it a privilege of ministry to be serving with you in mission here.

A personal note is a follow-up on last year: Namely, the need to do the "job," and yet have periods of refreshment, study and renewal. It is still a struggle, partially because of the situation and partly because of the subject (myself).

Ah, such foibles we perpetuate!

Last, the profound gratitude to so many: the leaders of the associations, the Board and commissions; the pastors and their families; the office staff who know the meaning of a "a boiler room operation;" to our colleagues in the wider UCC who support and care for us; and especially for Beth, whose love and support are beyond expectations. Your prayers, friends, keep my faith sustained, as God nurtures me with blessings.

Roger Knight

## **Some Reasons to Celebrate**

### **Accomplishments of Past Year: Moderator**

The 1992 Annual Meeting concludes my term as your Moderator; I appreciate the opportunity to serve these past two years. I anticipate many good things yet to come for the Southeast Conference because we have some of the greatest people in the world right here in the Southeast!

There are several things I would like to address in this report. First, a look back at some of the accomplishments of the past year. Through the hard work of our Conference Minister, Joyce Myers-Brown (chair of the Local Arrangements Committee) and a host of others, the United Church Board for World Ministries met in our Conference for the first time in its 182-year history: Nothing but praise for the way the World Board Meeting was hosted. Thanks are in order for everyone who had a part in making this meeting successful.

Another reason to celebrate is the VISIONS '91 Campaign. Your response to this campaign has been great. Erna Bryant, Chair, has put in many hours of hard work to make VISIONS '91 successful. Our thanks to her and those who worked with her to move VISIONS from a dream to a reality! The money is coming in from VISIONS '91 and the Board of Directors is developing strategies to attain the five goals established when VISIONS '91 was approved. Again the people of the Southeast Conference responded!

So many have done so much making it impossible to list each area and each person, but please know your labor of love is greatly appreciated. Thanks to all who have volunteered to work in some capacity in order to carry out the mission and ministry of the Southeast Conference. In looking back, there is so much to be thankful for, and in looking ahead, there is so much yet to be done.

Now to the future. I know you will offer your love and support to my successor just as you have to me. We need to stay focused on the mission God has entrusted to us as we move into the future because the work of the Kingdom is too important to get sidetracked into opposing groups. God has entrusted us with a great work; may we endeavor to work and pray that in all things God may be glorified. New challenge lie before us: a more visible and accessible Conference Office; new churches yet to be born; new people to be reached with God's message of reconciling love; identity resources that will help us help others know who we are and what we are about as the United Church of Christ in the Southeast; training for our people, clergy and lay, thereby strengthening our churches in their respective communities; a greater willingness to give through OCWM in order for programming and resources to be readily available for our churches. Well, the list could go on and on, and I am sure you can think of some things you would like to see happen in our Conference as well.

One of the great challenges we continue to face is in the area of finance—there is so much work to be carried out with limited resources. I encourage you to support the work of the Kingdom through OCWM. It is imperative that we have the resources to carry out the mission of our Conference and the only way to accomplish this is through the faithful giving of our people!

Another great challenge is how to come out of our Annual Meetings without some feeling like losers and others like winners. As we vote on the resolutions submitted, it would benefit us to pay heed to Paul's admonition, "If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together" (I Cor. 12:26 RSV). I encourage you to prayerfully consider the decisions we will make and how those decisions we will make and how those decisions will affect the work of the Kingdom in our beloved Southeast Conference! Finally, I would like to thank Roger Knight, our Conference Minister, for the patience, advice and support he has provided to me over these past two years. It has been a pleasure to work with the staff of the Southeast Conference: Roger Knight, Mitch Johnson, Alice Lawrence and Adrienne Laraway.

We are blessed with having staff who are knowledgeable, dedicated and willing to perform ministry because they love God and the Church!

I would also like to thank all volunteers who have done so much for our Conference and the Kingdom. May God bless you in my prayer.

In Christian Love,

Roy Bain,  
Moderator  
Southeast Conference

## **An Affirmation of Our Unity: Associate Conference Minister**

The words spoken during my Installation into the Associate Conference Minister position last June have resounded all year, “we gather with you and with the United Church of Christ as a sign of our mutual ministry in Christ’s name.”

For me and for Helen, my wife, it was much more than just another in the countless number of official ceremonies we have witnessed or shared. Erston Butterfield in his recounting of Southeast Conference history just before the Installation Service had seen to that. He carried us all with his recollection to a time when ministry of this Conference was carried out in fear and secrecy under the dark and ominous threat of racial bigotry. A threat so real that Black and White leaders of the Conference met frequently to confer on the Lord’s business around isolated park benches.

Now standing with Roger Knight, our Conference Minister, and Paul Sherry, our national church President, I could make an open response to serve my church willingly and faithfully, not only as a Black man, but also as the Associate Conference Minister. Then came the reaffirmation of our unity from the shout of over 200 voices in racially inclusive attendance, “we gather with you ...”

Looking through my calendar I review in summary what I have done in this office since that time of warm and meaningful installation.

I attended the 18th General Synod at Norfolk, VA, from June 27 to July 2. This was a time of refreshment and renewal for us. Thirty consecutive years as an Army chaplain had isolated me somewhat from the mainstream issues and persons of the wider UCC church. At Norfolk, I renewed associations with long lost colleagues and fellow seminarians, and became comfortable again with the methods and processes of the UCC Church in action. I have since discovered the value of that experience in my continuance as Associate Conference Minister.

The Rev. Sterling Cary, the Illinois Conference Minister, came on official visit to Southeast Conference from the end of July through the first week in August. I escorted him through six different cluster meetings. There was good feedback received from local churches concerning their continued missions and ministries. This exercise was especially helpful for our African-American churches, all of which are at a critical point in their long history.

My on-going position activities include Alabama-Tennessee and Georgia-South Carolina associations’ Staff Coordinator; focused attention and support of

Church Development throughout the Conference; the Social Justice Commission, Stewardship and OCWM commissions; and Cluster Development.

With the Alabama-Tennessee Association I have attended six periodic and thematic cluster meetings of their churches in the Crossville, Birmingham and Belvidere geographical areas. The first series clustered around the mission development topic, "See, Judge, Act," a scriptural approach to re-thinking and re-working the local church mission. The second series gathered around our growing concern for our national health crisis. At both series I provided information and responses relative to the overall Southeast Conference mission.

Also with AL/TN, I have kept close to the Association's continuing outreach and ministry through meetings of their Executive Council and selected committee meetings, especially church and ministry, and evangelism and church development.

In Evangelism and Church Development, some specific reports can be made. The Evangelism Institute III for Southeast Conference was conducted under oversight of the Conference staff with a committee chair and members functioning as representatives from the Association. Over 60 persons attended as official designates from the local churches. The United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, Alan Johnson and Marti McMane, were again leading and they were ably supported by a key speaker/presenter, Jackie McMakin. Evaluations received were typically positive to ecstatic in review and analysis of the activities related to that project.

Church development has not met our accelerated expectations and schedule, but it is on target in terms of official forecasts for both the conference and the national church, and more importantly it is moving through the six steps of Planned Conference Strategy:

1. Analysis of demographics over the past 10 years.
2. Analysis of demographics for the next 10 years.
3. Compilation of initial opportunities using a variety of models.
4. Prioritizing oaf the church development opportunities.
5. Budgeting for costs.
6. The establishment of a time line.

In this connection Button Gwinnett (now Gwinnett Community) at Lilburn is on the way with extensive refurbishing, a new pastor, and signs of growth and potential being informative and directive for the church's mission. The Chattanooga, TN New Church Start is about to call an organizing pastor. We are interviewing and have projected completion of this phase by mid-summer. The Macon, GA, First Church business has been put in order for a proposal to be developed for SEC and BHM, and Southeast DeKalb County New Church Start is being brought into focus, which includes also interfaith, exploration. We remain committed in the 1990s to developing fifteen churches within Southeast Conference, with at least six being minority focused. Center Church at Atlanta is being considered as not only a project for revision but also as a site for relocation

and development of the Southeast Conference Center. We also look to some churches affiliating (called “adoptions”).

In summary, the Southeast Conference Church Development Commission is intact and in focus.

Mitchell Johnson

## **New and Revitalized Projects Underway**

The Commission has considered or projected the following sites for development:

1. Chattanooga, TN; new church start; approved.
2. DeKalb, Southeast (Atlanta); new church start.
3. Columbia, SC; new church start.
4. Macon, GA; new church start.
5. Murfreesboro, TN; new church start.
6. Lilburn, GA, Gwinnett; renewal
7. Marietta, GA, Pilgrimage; renewal
8. Atlanta, Carroll Heights; renewal

After considering the above sites, the Commission makes the following recommendations:

1. Call organizing pastoral leadership for Chattanooga, in conjunction with the Association and Conference;

2. A proposal to be prepared for a Macon congregation regarding their next steps; to be submitted to United Church Board for Homeland Ministries and to the Conference in the fall (August). This proposal should have in-depth input from the Association.

3. Southeast DeKalb County, GA to prepare proposal regarding organizing steps; to submit it to UCBHM and the Conference in the fall (August date);

4. Columbia, SC proposal to be developed, including directions for their immediate future. Their initial study should be reviewed; then forward their development design, in light of the needs and available resources;

5. Murfreesboro, TN: to be visited by Conference ministers and representatives from the Association; to develop proposal in light of feasibility; then begin search for a “gathering Pastor” to bring together all interested parties;

6. Carroll Heights’ documents, property deed and other materials to be secured and updated. Conference and association staff should work with present Pastor and congregation to plan for continuing growth and future developments; and

7. Reports from Gwinnett Community Church, Pilgrimage of Marietta, and Savannah First Church should be submitted to Conference regarding their revitalization.

Our Commission is exceedingly grateful to our Conference Minister, Ms. Alice Lawrence and Tony Healy for their assistance in providing data for our meetings.

## **Much Is Yet To Be Done: Social Justice**

The agendas that become part of this Commission's concerns keep expanding. At every turn we are besieged and overwhelmed by problems and issues to be addressed. Our faith calls us to witness to God's reign of justice and compassion.

Due to personnel changes, most of this Commission's report is an acknowledgment of what is being done rather than direct, organizational work which needs more emphasis in the future. Some items of note:

1. In September a national training event in Nashville, sponsored by the Office for Church and Society and the United Church Board for World Ministries, introduced the "See-Judge-Act" model. Debbie Douglas of Crossville was trained, and has since led training events at all the Alabama-Tennessee Cluster meetings; the model is recommended highly to all churches.

2. The UCC Priority voted at General Synod, "National Health Care for All," touches all of our society. Jerry O'Connor of Gwinnett Community, Leon and Irene Dickinson of Pleasant Hill, and Roger Knight attended the Southern Regional event in North Carolina. The materials and guidance of the staff person for this priority, Dr. Loretta Richardson, are available to help us on this complex issue. A major forum will also be held at Annual Meeting.

3. The Right to Privacy issue was a discussion and study topic twice by the Board of Directors, once led by Dr. Jon Gunnemann. The impetus for the study was the conference's hosting of the United Church Board for World Ministries, to fulfill the policy of addressing laws which restrict to privacy when a UCC national meeting is held in the state.

4. A retreat for selected SEC clergy, "Men Against Violence Against Women" was postponed until Feb. 1-4, 1993. It is sponsored jointly by the Commissions of Social Justice, Women's, and Church & Ministry, along with major funding by the UCBHM. The topic is so crucial to so many lives that the training of selected, influential clergy will be significant for our churches and this society.

5. In so many ways persons act out of the convictions of their faith socially, whether in personal projects close-to-home where we live or in major project such as dealing with nuclear silos, toxic wastes, militarism.

6. Numerous projects to meet human needs in the Southeast are funded through the American Missionary Association/United Church Board for Homeland Ministries as arms of mission here.

## **Making Ourselves a Christian Education Conference**

The following people were members of the Christian Education Commission: Herb Young, Artis Johnson, Maureen Jenci-Shelton, Ben Welch, Roger Jones, Beth Knight, and Woody Clark.



We held on Conference call in September and four meetings throughout the year. Two members did not attend any meeting; two attended every meeting; one attended three meetings; the others attended at least one meeting. In the future we hope that those willing to be placed on the Commission will also be willing to attend meetings.

We conducted one workshop for Commission Members, Association Committee Members, and any other interested persons. In January, Pet Goldberg, staff person from UCBHM, led the workshop which centered on "WHAT WE CAN DO TO MAKE THIS A CHRISTIAN EDUCATION CONFERENCE."

The Commission sent Herb Young to a Christian Education Workshop on Leadership Training in Avon Park, FL. Barbara Orman from the Georgia-South Carolina Association (Pilgrimage Church in Marietta, GA) also attended the workshop. We hope to develop a similar workshop for our Conference.

One of our main goals was to have our Commission become more visible throughout the Conference. We established a work force to go into the local churches and conduct a special program or workshop on Christian education. Beth Knight and Maureen Jenci-Shelton have been invited into two churches thus far. We ask each association leader to make this program known to their local churches.

We have reserved two dates for Summer Camping Experiences at Children's Harbor near Alexander City, AL. A questionnaire was sent to most of the Conference churches with young people to determine the interest level in the local churches; only 3 questionnaires were returned. We will have a camp on July 25-31. If you are interested, call (205) 756-2335 or (205) 756-6625.

We also sent mailings about the National Youth Event, programs with our Iowa connection, and a Pan Pal program with youth from Iowa.

We have over the year had much discussion about Christian education issues and needs in our Conference. We continue to try to raise the level of Christian education awareness and participation throughout our Conference. We believe that Christian Education is a major actor in the strength of a local church, association and Conference, to strengthen our individuals and churches. We ask your help and support.

Finally, if you are interested in a special program or workshop in your church or area, please let us know.

Rev. Herb Young, Chair  
P.O. Box 155, Valley, AL 36854

## **Maintaining the Quality of Pastoral Leadership: Church & Ministry**

We have not functioned as fully as needed and desired this year. We do call attention to the following:

1. Orientation Retreat for Church & Ministry committees of the associations—now the Third Annual—proves very valuable. Ervin Milton of OCLL

again provided leadership. Also, representatives of the Insurance Board guided us as we considered the implications for liability insurance and committee procedures when dealing with cases of sexual improprieties. All churches are urged to have the UCC Insurance of which all policies contain liability insurance.

2. Clergy and Spouse Retreat was regrettably postponed twice. The critical need is to have our clergy together at least annually for retreat, fellowship and instruction. We had tried to plan events to include both ordained and licensed ministers. Future planning will probably need to schedule separate events in most cases.

3. The year ahead anticipates at least the following: Clergy & Spouse Retreat; Orientation & Planned event (November); and the Pre-Retirement Seminar.

The quality of pastoral leadership must always be maintained; their support, encouragement and continuing training is key to our church life.

Respectfully submitted,  
Michael Small, chair

## **These Are the Days to Empower Women: Women in Church & Society**

This commission represents one of the most important resources of the Church: Women. These are days to honor, support, liberate, and empower women in church and society. So much more can, should, and we hope, will be done in the future.

During this year:

1. The Southern Regional Retreat was held in Orlando, FL, with a goodly number of women from the Southeast Conference in attendance. The Rev. Mary Sue Gast, new Executive Director of the UCC Coordinating Center for Women, was keynoter.

2. Various events within the SEC occur, some of which we are aware of; for example, East Alabama Association annual summer overnight (at Children's Harbor), and Church Women United (CWU) meetings. (Erna Bryant was honored as Most Valiant Woman).

3. Numerous of our churches celebrate Women's Week during February annually. We encouraged all churches to secure the materials from the Coordinating Center each year and observe Women's Week simultaneously.

4. The Women's Mite Scholarship Fund both received and distributed monies to assist women to participate in various leadership events. The bags and materials were displayed at all association meetings.

Plans for this near future include:

1. SEC representatives at the national UCC Women's Biennial assembly in Cleveland, July 30-Aug. 2, which is always a stimulating and empowering occasion.

2. The SEC Women's Retreat, scheduled for DuBose Center at Monteagle, TN, on the weekend of Oct. 10-12, 1992. We are fortunate to have as Keynoter,

the Rev. Dr. Flora Wilson Bridges, new UCC minister, religious professor and Dean of Chapel at Spelman College. It will be a memorable occasion—plan to attend! Coordinators are Trudy Braun and Shirley Tucker, assisted in planning by Lena Dollar, Beth Knight, Joyce Myers-Brown, Juanita Hixon and Kathryn Robinson.

Although not part of our commission directly, we take pride in the increasing number of those competent, able, alive and dedicated women clergy in our Conference.

Serving on the commission were Deborah Crockett, Juanita Hixon, Kathryn Robinson, Shirley Higgins, Lois Harry and Virada Brand.

## **Slate of Nominations, 1992**

POSITION	CONTINUING	TERM	NOMINATIONS	TERM
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### ***BOARD OF DIRECTORS, OFFICERS***

Moderator			Erna Bryant	1994
Vice Moderator			Richard Sales	1994
Secretary	Kim Ward	1993		
Treasurer	Lester Ariail	1993		
Past Moderator			Roy Bain	1994

### ***BOARD OF DIRECTORS, MEMBERS***

Members-at-Large	Paul Johnson	1993	Al Dempsey	1994
	William Jackson	1993	Betty Moon	1994
Alabama-Tennessee	James Smalley	1993	Andrew Frierson	1994
East Alabama	Bill Tweed	1993	Don Harmon	1994
Georgia-South Carolina	Lester Ariail	1993	Stephen Sterner	1994
South Alabama	Charles Melvin	1993	Woody Clark	1994

### ***COMMISSIONS***

Church and Ministry			Roger Jones	1994
	Holly Nelson	1993	Robert Johnson	1994
Christian Education	Herb Young		Maureen Jenci-Shelton	1994
Stewardship & OCWM	James Mason	1993	Eugene Keen, chair	1994
	Winston Clark	1994		
Church Development & Evangelism	Patti Talley	1994	Bob Sherard, chair	1994
			Ed Schneider	1994
Women	Juanita Hixon	1993	Joyce Myers-Brown	1994
			Shirley Bowen	1994

Social Justice	1993	1994
	Leon Dickinson	1994

### **COMMITTEES**

Heritage Committee	Idella Childs 1993 Kathryn Childers 1993	
Nominating Committee		James Myers 1994 Lenda Sherrell 1994

### **GENERAL SYNOD**

Delegate	Nancy Sales 1993	Rebecca Paschal 1995
Alternate	Debbie Douglas 1993	Katrina Gardener 1995
Delegate	Wayde Washburn 1993	Andrew Frierson 1995

## **Background of Nominees**

Erna Bryant: Layperson, Central Congregational United Church of Christ, Atlanta, GA; Chair of VISIONS '91 Financial Campaign for Conference; and former moderator of the Georgia-South Carolina Association.

Richard Sales: Pastor, Pilgrim Congregational Church, UCC, Birmingham, AL; served as chair of Stewardship & OCWM commission, and was missionary in southern Africa for over 20 years.

Alford Dempsey: Layperson, First Congregational Church, UCC, of Atlanta; serves as moderator of his church; has served two years on Board of Directors, and has chaired the board's Property Committee.

Betty Moon: Layperson, North Main Congregational Christian Church, UCC, Roanoke, AL; has been active in youth work within the Conference and in her church.

Andrew Frierson, Pastor, First United Church of Christ, Sweetwater, TN; is a retired middle school principal in Chattanooga, TN; has been active in community work, and been active in new church development in his association.

Don Harmon: Layperson, Lanett Congregational Christian Church, Lanett, AL; has served as treasurer of the East Alabama-West Georgia Association, and served as member of the Conference's Finance Committee.

Stephen Sterner: Pastor, Central Congregational United Church of Christ, Atlanta, GA. Has served previously as secretary for new church development, Board of Homeland Ministries, and as a new church start pastor in Texas.

Woody Clark: pastor, Liberty Congregational Church, UCC, Brantley, AL; and is serving as moderator of the South Alabama-Northwest Florida Association.

Robert Johnson: retired pastor; a member of First Congregational Church, UCC, Atlanta, GA; formerly served churches in New York City.

Maureen Jenci-Shelton: Ordinand; a member of Central Congregational United Church of Christ, Atlanta, GA; approved for ordination by the Georgia-South Carolina Association, and awaiting call; and served previously on the Christian Education Commission.

Robert Sherard: Pastor, First Congregational Church, UCC, Savannah, GA; former moderator of the General Synod of the United Church of Christ; and has filed unexpired term on commission previously.

Ed Schneider: Pastor, Pleasant Hill Community Church, Pleasant Hill, TN; has previously served in Conference capacities in the Central Atlantic Conference.

Eugene Keen: Pastor emeritus, United Church of Huntsville, UCC, Huntsville, AL; has been active in Conference capacities previously.

Winston Clark: Pastor, New Hope Congregational Christian Church, Clio, AL; is retired as pastoral counselor.

Joyce Myers-Brown: Ordained; member of Central Congregational United Church of Christ, Atlanta, GA; retired missionary in Angola and France; and served as regional staff person for Office of Church Life and Leadership.

Shirley Brown: Layperson, United Congregational Christian Church, UCC, LaGrange, GA; is active in local church and in the East Alabama-West Georgia Association.

Leon Dickinson: Retired chaplain; member of Pleasant Hill Community Church, UCC, Pleasant Hill, TN; served as a chaplain and a staff person with the Office of Church Life and Leadership.

Lenda Sherrell: Layperson, Pilgrim Congregational Church, UCC, Chattanooga, TN; has formerly served as treasurer for the Southeast Conference.

James Myers: Pastor, First Congregational Church, UCC, Birmingham, AL; served formerly as moderator of the Conference and chair of the Personnel Committee.

Rebecca Paschal: Layperson, First Congregational Church, UCC, of Atlanta; filled unexpired Synod term in 1991; and is a student at Spelman College in Atlanta.

Katrina Gardener: Layperson, First Congregational Church, UCC, Chattanooga; student at Fisk University in Nashville, TN.

Annie Neal, Layperson, Howard Congregational Church, UCC, Nashville, TN; has served as Chair of Directorate, Coordinating Center for Women; has been active in church and in the academic community.

## **Program Year Change**

On the recommendation of the Program Committee, the Board of Directors has approved a change in the program year from June to June to the period of January to December.

The decision to stagger the service of Commission chairs over the year was made to provide for continuity on program commissions and committees, and to

help those bodies better accommodate the different times that representatives elected by the Conference and the associations are seated.

The decision affects when a few persons actually begin service in their elected capacities, but not to the extent that it would require amending the Constitution and By-Laws, the Board of Directors determined.

First, persons elected to the Board of Directors and as the chairs of the Commissions will be seated on the Board at the conclusion of the Annual Meeting, as always. However, the current Commission chairs will continue to chair those bodies until the end of the year, with the chair-elect serving as a Commission member. Second, members of commissions and committees will take office immediately, again as always.

These members will be joined by Association representatives at an annual orientation session scheduled for early November.

## Revised 1992 Budget and Proposed 1993 Budget

*The Board of Directors proposes for adoption the following 1993 budget for the Southeast Conference. Included for comparison are actual 1991 transactions and the revised 1992 budget.*

	<b>1991 Actual</b>	<b>1992 Revised</b>	<b>1993 Proposed</b>
<b>INCOME</b>			
OCWM Support	181,345	182,668	197,668
Church Development	3,257	3,257	3,257
Investment Income	10,374	14,200	14,200
Reimbursement, etc.	3,145	2,300	2,300
Association Special Support	10,575	12,575	12,575
UCBHM/Staff Support	20,000	20,000	20,000
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>229,196</b>	<b>235,000</b>	<b>250,000</b>
<b>EXPENSE</b>			
<b>Mission Beyond the Conference</b>			
OCWM National	15,000	18,000	20,700
General Synod	2,766	1,000	2,500
Conference Minister Council	310	1,000	1,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18,076</b>	<b>20,000</b>	<b>24,200</b>
<b>Mission Within the Conference</b>			
Church Development	2,546	6,000	*0
Resource Material	434	500	500
SE News/Packets	3,724	3,724	4,000
Annual Meeting	707	500	1,000
Staff Travel	14,318	11,892	12,092

Commissions:			
Church & Ministry	727	500	500
Social Justice	38	500	500
Christian Ed/Youth	736	500	500
Outreach/Stewardship	166	500	500
Church Development	1,005	500	500
Women (including national mtg.)	647	500	500
Program Fund	0	1,500	2,000
Church Projects	*0	9,000	*17,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>23,634</b>	<b>36,116</b>	<b>39,592</b>
<b>Conference Organization and Operation</b>			
Board of Directors	2,959	3,000	3,500
Executive Committee	124	600	600
Personnel Committee	1,576	600	600
Finance Committee	359	750	600
Nominating Committee	0	250	250
Annual Meeting Committee	529	500	600
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,547</b>	<b>5,550</b>	<b>6,150</b>
<b>Office Operation</b>			
Rent	4,800	4,800	6,800
Telephone	6,353	6,353	6,400
Office Supplies	2,684	4,000	4,000
Postage	4,877	4,877	5,000
Equipment Lease	0	0	0
Equipment Maintenance	1,864	3,784	3,785
Auditors	0	4,000	2,000
Dues and Fees	180	180	180
Workers' Compensation	794	794	800
Liability Insurance	730	730	800
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>22,282</b>	<b>29,518</b>	<b>29,765</b>
<b>Personnel**</b>	<b>146,430</b>	<b>140,193</b>	<b>146,293</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>3,623</b>	<b>3,623</b>	<b>4,000</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSE</b>	<b>219,592</b>	<b>235,000</b>	<b>250,000</b>

\* Category for church project and church development combined in 1993 budget.

\*\* Personnel includes salary for Conference Minister, Associate Conference Minister, Office Manager and part-time Bookkeeper, and includes benefits for housing, social security offset and employer share, annuity, insurance and family protection, continuing education and sabbatical.

## Budget Balanced in 1991: Finance Committee

The Southeast Conference ended the fiscal year 1991 with another balanced budget and an increase in giving for mission of \$9,198 over 1990. That is good

news! We did not accomplish as much as we dreamed of doing but the base is firm and we did move forward. Praise God!

The Finance Committee has received regular reports on the progress of the "Visions '91" special financial campaign. The success of this endeavor, which is reported more fully elsewhere, is another cause for celebration and thanksgiving.

The Conference, under the leadership of James Mason, is beginning a Planned Giving program, James attended a planned giving training event in Chicago last year thanks to the United Church of Christ Office of Planned Giving; you will be hearing more from him about how you can plan now so that some of the financial blessings you have received during your lifetime can go on supporting the work of the church after you have joined that great cloud of witnesses.

In March, we welcomed David Speno as a co-opted member of the Finance Committee. His banking and financial management experience will be helpful as we review the Conference investments and related policies. David is also responsible for an interpretative mission presentation which is a new part of our financial reporting to the Annual Meeting, to illustrate more fully what your dollars do in mission and service.

The need to evaluate and manage the real property assets of the Conference has increased. The Finance Committee recommended to the Board in March that the Property Subcommittee be expanded to include a representative from the Alabama-Tennessee, Georgia-South Carolina, East Alabama-West Georgia, and South Alabama-Northwest Florida associations, to work with the Board members and its chairman, Al Dempsey, who has done a fantastic job!

We also have some disappointments. Among these was our inability, due to insufficient growth in OCWM giving, to acknowledge and reward our staff with an increase in compensation. We hope by mid-year that giving has increased sufficiently over the adjusted 1992 level to adjust the 1992 compensation for the remainder of 1992.

The shortfall in OCWM Basic Support and the relatively small contribution to the "Strengthen the Church" offering made it necessary for us to cut back on some church development and renewal plans as well as other programming. We really must increase our support!

We were able to hold our OCWM Basic Support to the 1990 level of \$15,000, but this was down from the budgeted \$18,000. We are still receiving more money from National to support ministry within this Conference than we are sending on to the Wider Mission through National. We must continue to work to change this pattern.

The Finance Committee has recommended a 1993 operating budget of \$250,000. This is a very modest, and we believe it is an attainable increase over the 1992 adjusted budget. We urge your commitment to fund the ministries this budget will make possible.

Solid gains, much hard work, slower growth and visions yet to be realized—that is how I would summarize the area of Conference life in which the



Finance Committee had been most involved. With your commitment and support, dreams will become realities and God will judge us faithful stewards. May it be so.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Everett, Chair

Lester Ariail, Bill Green, Don Harmon, Alexis Reeves, David Speno

## **GENERAL BALANCE SHEET, DECEMBER 31, 1991**

### **Assets**

#### Current Assets

Merrill Lynch—Restricted	39,912.29
Merrill Lynch—Designated	231,546.00
Merrill Lynch—Southern Union	79,306.93
Merrill Lynch—Ensminger	73,822.64
Petty Cash	36.53
Bank Account #1 (General)	21,512.90
Accounts Receivable	6,104.00
Prepaid Insurance	3,716.60
Prepaid Other	(8,050.00)
Temporary Transfer	93.50
Total Current	448,002.13
Fixed Assets	
Office Equipment	14,769.09
Accumulated depreciation	(7,257.15)
Total Fixed	7,511.94
Other Assets	
Investment/Alabama Power	10,000.00
Total Other	10,000.00
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>465,514.07</b>

### **Liabilities and Equities**

#### Current Liabilities

Accounts Receivable	50,421.34
Federal Income Tax Withheld	246.00
FICA Tax Withheld	145.37
State Income Tax Withheld	73.49
Total Liabilities	50,886.20

#### Long-Term Liabilities

Restricted Account Fund	39,912.29
Miscellaneous Loans	13,130.88
Ensminger Fund	73,822.64

Southern Union College Fund	79,306.93
Jonathan Fund	(18.94)
Freda Brown Memorial Fund	86.00
Georgia-South Carolina Association	769.99
Elon Home for Children	2,763.28
Morgan-Scott Project	2,372.00
Uplands, Inc.	1,284.00
Habitat for Humanity	2,864.00
Emmaus House	98.00
Women's Mite	1,100.46
Columbia Building Fund	1,600.00
Columbia Aided Fields, SEC	5,952.41
Leased Auto Revolving Fund	70.00
Special Meetings	55.00
National Youth Event	1,707.82
SEC Women's Meeting	1,454.65
Other Designated Funds	9,183.43
Columbus Fund	13,155.47
Church Development/Special Project	4,189.10
Special Campaign	71,366.21
Special New Church Development	5,018.00
Special Gifts	2,750.00
Annuity Funds Held	2,013.88
Ingram/Alabama Power Fund	10,000.00
Macon Fund	40,000.00
Total Long-Term	386,007.50
Equity	
Retained Earnings	26,549.55
Current Year Profit (Loss)	2,070.82
Total Equity	28,620.37
<b>TOTAL LIABILITY AND EQUITY</b>	<b>465,514.07</b>

### **Unaudited Statement**

## **UCC Starts National Fund-Raising Campaign**

*The Annual Meeting will be asked by the Board of Directors to approve the involvement of the Southeast Conference in an initial study phase of a national United Church of Christ fund-raising campaign called "Make A Difference!"*

*The Mission Study program does not commit the Conference to be part of the national campaign now but lays the planning groundwork for future participation in 1994 by churches, if approved next year by the Annual Meeting.*

*That timing was deliberately planned so that the campaign would not interfere with the completion of the Conference's own VISIONS '91 capital campaign.*

*This is the background on "Make A Difference!"*

The purpose of the Make A Difference! Campaign is to empower the whole United Church of Christ—local churches, associations, conferences and national instrumentalities—to meet tomorrow's needs of mission and ministry at home and around the world.

The idea of Make A Difference! is compellingly simple—to raise a minimum of \$30 million to meet conference, national and global needs in three specific "caring" areas of mission and ministry.

Caring for Clergy

Caring for Church

Caring for Community

Importantly, these are needs not just of today, but of tomorrow's Church. For that reason, much of the funds will be for endowments which will continue to grow in the coming year, thus benefiting future generations of the United Church of Christ, as well as our own.

Based on a \$30 million goal, \$10 million will be utilized for conference needs and \$20 million for national and global needs.

The conferences of the United Church of Christ will be asked to set goals based on their contributions to Basic Support of Our Church's Wider Mission and any per capita giving for conference budgets. It is anticipated that some conferences will adopt larger challenge goals in order to include additional needs in the Make A Difference! Campaign.

Most local churches—except in the Southeast Conference when it will be later—will conduct the fund raising phase of the Make A Difference! Campaign during the 1993-94 program year. Churches will be asked to adopt goals based on their giving to Basic Support of Our Church's Wider Mission, membership and total church giving.

### **Caring for Clergy**

Of the national portion of Make A Difference, \$6.5 million will be allocated to a Caring for Clergy endowment fund. 65% of the income generated by this endowment will be used to meet needs such as:

Scholarship assistance for UCC seminarians and Ph.D. students, in 1994.

Support for international seminarians from global partner churches.

Post-graduate study for leaders in health and welfare ministries.

Advanced training for bivocational and licensed ministers.

The other 35% of the Caring for Clergy endowment income will be dedicated to the support and nurture of pastors, educators and administrators.

Continuing education for pastors and church leaders.

Support for pastors in personal and spiritual crises.

Financial aid for continuing education in global partner churches.

Many conferences will include their own Caring for Clergy needs in the Make A Difference! Campaign, such as leadership training and development.

## **Caring for Church**

Of the national portion of Make A Difference!, \$7 million will be used in Caring for Church. \$5.5 million of these funds will be used for direct support of new and existing churches in the United Church of Christ:

The advanced purchase of land for new churches.

Loans from a revolving fund for renovation of local churches.

Grants for rebuilding Native American churches and parsonages. Of the national Caring for Church funds, \$1.5 million will be placed in an endowment to support pastor leaders of new and renewing congregations. As in the Caring for Clergy area, many conferences will include additional opportunities for Caring for Church in the Make a Difference! Campaign.

## **Caring for Community**

The United Church of Christ's historic commitment to justice and peace is rooted in the preaching, teaching and healing of Jesus Christ. \$6.5 million of the national portion of Make A Difference! will be used to create an endowment known as The Genesis Fund.

The purpose of The Genesis Fund is to expand the witness of the United Church of Christ in three areas which touch all human life:

Stewardship of the Earth.

The rights and freedoms of people throughout the world.

Fair use of economic resources for the wholeness of humanity.

Income from The Genesis Fund endowment will be used to support new mission initiatives in national and global settings.

Of these monies, 50% will be used to respond to initiatives proposed by local churches, associations and conferences. The remaining income will be used to respond to initiatives proposed by the national instrumentalities of the United Church of Christ.

The Genesis Fund will be administered by a working group including representatives of UCC conferences and national instrumentalities

Make A Difference! is headed by the Rev. W. James Halfaker, National Director.

## **Resolution Concerning Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Persons**

**Sponsor(s): East Alabama-West Georgia Association**

Person to Contact: Mr. Bill Tweed

Address: 244 Poplar Circle, LaGrange, GA 30240

Telephone: (404) 882-8148

### **1. Title or subject area of Resolution:**

Concerning Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Persons and their ministries

### **2. State a brief rationale (Biblical, Theological, Ethical) relating to the resolution.**

We are people of the East Alabama-West Georgia Association, C.C.C., UCC. We are imperfect people but we believe in the Word of God and seek to live in obedience and joy of the Bible.

We are concerned that ministers filling our pulpit know God's Word and willingly adjust their life styles to its commands and graces. We ask the minister be a helpful role model in and out of the pulpit for our children, young people and adults, in visiting in the homes, and representing our church in community and civic situations. When we are called upon to place people into positions of spiritual leadership in our church we will seek the guidance of our Heavenly Father in prayer and protection under our U.S. Constitution's Bill of Rights guarantee of religious freedom.

We are amazed and shocked to read the enclosed resolution approved by the General Synod and being urged upon us. We understand that the Synod actions through the years "speak to us—not for us." Therefore we must boldly speak out and take a stand against such a resolution as it is so much against the scriptures.

**Scriptures and Bible References:**

General 2:24 tells of God's divine plan for marriage: A man shall cleave to his wife (not to another man) and they shall become one flesh. If God approved gays marrying gays and lesbians marrying lesbians, child bearing would never occur.

Genesis 18 and 19 tell of the lifestyles of homosexuals and lesbians living in Sodom and Gomorrah, and of God's divine wrath upon such practices, and of His destruction of the two cities.

Mark 10:6-9 says God created male and female. The man shall cleave to his wife and God will join them together. This New Testament lesson affirms God's divine plan for cohabitation between married male and female.

Paul in Romans 1:22-28 informs us of the depths of sinfulness which he found in his evangelistic travels. Women changing their natural use into that which is against nature (against God's natural plan and laws for men and women). Men, leaving the natural use of women—burned in their lust one man with another man working that which is unseemly.

**Other Scripture References:**

Leviticus 18:22, 20:13; Deuteronomy 23:17-18; I Kings 14:24, 15:12, 22:46; II Kings 23:7

**3. What results are expected?**

Southeast Conference approval of this resolution and submission of a similar resolution for action by General Synod 19.

**4. Is this Resolution related to any action by any other agency or instrumentality of the United Church of Christ?**

This resolution is in response to General Synod's resolution 91-GS-67, "Affirming Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Persons and Their Ministries."

**5. Give a cost estimate of implementing the action of this Resolution.**

None.

### **Resolution Concerning Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Persons and Their Ministries**

WHEREAS, We have read the General Synod resolution in question; and find the scripture quoted in 91-GS-67 utterly fails in its intention by making no mention of the numerous times the Apostle Paul decries homosexual activities and calls those activities sin in God's sight.

WHEREAS, We have reread and studied Genesis 18 and 19 telling of God's terrible displeasure with homosexual and lesbian practices in Sodom and Gomorrah, and we are mindful of God's divine plan for marriage found in Genesis 2:24, and

WHEREAS, With careful searching of the scriptures we find no scripture references where people openly living in sinful ways should be permitted to become our spiritual leaders. To the contrary, scriptures teach that the church should remove them till they repent.

WHEREAS, Our Lord Jesus continued this good plan as taught in Mark 10:6-9, and St. Paul continues admonitions of overthrowing God's plan for sexual practices and life styles as we read in Romans 1:22-28.

THEREFORE, be it resolved, That the Southeast Conference, United Church of Christ, reject and refuse, totally and completely, to abide by the General Synod resolution 91-GS-67.

THEREFORE, be it resolved, We cannot deviate from God's word just to satisfy our "pains."

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Knowing that gay, lesbian, bisexual and all persons are God's creation, we must work even harder to educate and provide resources that may lead these people away from their sin and bring them into a full understanding and acceptance of God's plan of salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, In keeping with Bible teaching, to let it be known to our National Offices of the UCC, and that we will refuse to interview or even consider for any spiritual leadership position all persons openly living contrary to God's word. (I Cor. 5 & 6, Matt. 18:15-20)

BE IT RESOLVED, further more, That we ask and strongly urge the General Synod to pass a resolution affirming the position of this resolution concerning gay, lesbian and bisexual persons and their ministries.

BE IT RESOLVED, further more, That a copy of this resolution be forwarded to our United Church of Christ President, the Rev. Paul Sherry.

FINALLY, We ask that all persons of the United Church of Christ join with us in our opposition to compromising in order to gain support and friendship. Join with us to keep our religious beliefs free from any sinful influences that would tear us away from the joy and glory of God Almighty.

### **A Bill of Rights for Future Generations**

**Sponsor(s):** Peace Committee, Pleasant Hill Community Church, Walter Stark; Social Action Committee, Pleasant Hill Community Church, Peg Manon; Christian Education Committee, Pleasant Hill Community Church, Leon Dickinson

Person to Contact: See above

Address: P.O. Box 167, Pleasant Hill, TN 38578

Telephone: (615) 277-3193

**1. Title or subject area of Resolution:**

A petition to the leaders of the nations of the world to exercise all in their power to see that the Bill of Rights be adopted by the United Nations and become part of the UN charter.

**2. State a brief rationale (Biblical, Theological, Ethical) relating to the resolution.**

The population explosion and the exploitation of resources has caused poverty and limited resources for present and future generations. Earth's other creatures suffer with us. It is time for us to reaffirm the belief that God's plan is that all creation may live abundantly and in harmony without hoarding what others now and in the future need.

**3. What results are expected?**

Patterns of destruction of natural systems, which threaten all life, can be reversed if we take appropriate measures to educate and legislate for change. The church, at every level—local to national—is one of the best institutions to effect change. Lines of communication must be strengthened between local and national church bodies and secular groups to channel action-oriented people.

**4. Is this Resolution related to any action by any other agency or instrumentality of the United Church of Christ?**

1. The Wellspring Covenant written in October 1988 reflecting the concerns of a UCC consultation on the relationship of poverty and environmental issues.

2. Resolution of UCC/OCIS on support of UCC delegates to the Earth Summit, June 1-12, 1992, voted by the Directorate Meeting, Cleveland, OH, 11/22/91.

**5. Give a cost estimate of implementing the action of this Resolution.**

Paper (recycled) and postage for mailing to Southeast Conference churches for signatures. One copy to each of the following: President George Bush; the two Senators from each of the states of the Southeast Conference; the appropriate House of Representative members; the President of the UCC, Dr. Paul Sherry; OCIS; National IMPACT; The Cousteau Society; and NEERS.

**A Bill of Rights for Future Generations**

WHEREAS, Overpopulation and the excesses of human activities are posing a terrible threat to our descendants, and,

WHEREAS, The Bill of Rights, which proclaims freedom and equality for all, was written two centuries ago, but this magnificent text no longer suffices.

THEREFORE, be it resolved, The Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ endorses the request by The Cousteau Society for all members of society to petition the leaders of nations worldwide to exercise all their powers that the

proposed Bill of Rights for Future Generations be adopted by the United Nations and incorporated into its Charter as herein written:

**Article 1**

Future generations have a right to an uncontaminated and undamaged Earth and to its enjoyment as the ground of human history, of culture, and of social bonds that make each generation and individual member of one human family.

**Article 2**

Each generation, sharing in the estate and heritage of the Earth, has a duty as trustee for future generations to prevent irreversible and irreparable harm to life on Earth and to human freedom and dignity.

**Article 3**

It is, therefore, the paramount responsibility of each generation to maintain a constantly vigilant and prudential assessment of technological disturbances and modifications adversely affecting life on Earth, the balance of nature, and the evolution of humankind in order to protect the rights of future generations.

**Article 4**

All appropriate measures, including education, research and legislation, shall be taken to guarantee these rights and to ensure that they not be sacrificed for present expediencies and conveniences.

**Article 5**

Government, non-governmental organizations, and individuals are urged, therefore, imaginatively to implement these principles, as if in the very presence of those future generations whose rights we seek to establish and perpetuate.

## **Developing Better Church Stewardship: Stewardship & OCWM**

The Commission was basically inactive during the past year, recognizing that the "Visions '91" Campaign of the Conference so as not to have a competing focus in the churches. However, the Commission has developed plans for whom the fund drive is ended.

First, we determined that the best way to offer help to churches that would result in enhancing Our Church's Wider Mission, would be to call on associations to set up association-wide, or cluster meetings on Basic Stewardship to offer resources for local churches. This, in view of different methods of funding in different churches, seems the most effective way to develop our stewardship potential in the Conference.

Second, we are offering a program designed by the Stewardship Council for lay members of local churches, called "Mission Alive," in November. Staffed from National, this two-day conference is to accomplish three objectives: the establishment of a network of knowledgeable laity who understand the purposes of stewardship and commit to developing it locally; second, the making available to these folks and the churches resources of high quality by forming a library in the Conference of audio-visual resources and updating it; third, by utilizing this



network in bringing inspiring people from the corners of the world to our local churches.

Third, and in conjunction with the second, we are developing "Mission Visitor" program in which not only people from "outside" can be available to bring their perspectives to local congregations, but also former mission folk in the Southeast Conference and those returning from special opportunities and programs in this country, can help churches become more closely related to the myriad opportunities and exciting possibilities we are heir to in the United Church of Christ.

Recent events will help us begin our emphasis. First, we are to have Martha Mensendiek, a second-generation missionary from Japan, at our Annual Meeting in June, who will share with us some of her experiences. Then we hope that in each of the annual association meetings we will be able to schedule another missionary couple, recently returned from Japan, to bring a more local touch to the Conference about sharing with them a Mission Visitor, from another country, for a whole year, probably during 1993. We believe this "kick-start" will help our churches to realize what a joy it is to be linked to the world church.

Richard Sales, Convener

## **New Committee Ready to Start Work: Planned Giving Committee**

Ours is a new committee, established by the Board of Directors in 1991. It provides an opportunity for us as individuals to "Plan our Giving" with our assets—significant stewardship of what we have.

James Mason attended the national workshop in Chicago, and working with the UCC Commission on Development, he and the Committee are eager to "make the possibilities known."

The presentation to the Board of Directors in September was met with enthusiasm. Invitations to churches are eagerly sought; committee members are available. The Committee also welcomes others whose interest or abilities make them able to be an interpreter of Planned Giving.

You will hear from us at the Annual Meeting, in the plenary and also with a display. Talk with us and arrange for a visit to your church.

Some of the resources available are: UCC Planned Giving Newsletter (UCC Cleveland office); and UCC Planned Giving Ministry packer (UCC Cleveland office).

James Mason, chair  
Shirley Tucker, Steven Douglas, Kim Ward, William Green

## **Assistance Given to 3 Seminary Students: Scholarship Committee**

The Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ is responsible for the administration of scholarship grants and loan funds through the Scholarship Committee.

These funds are made available from the interest of two sources: The Southern Union College Fund and The Ensminger Memorial Scholarship Trust. It provides assistance to women and men in their preparation for the vocation of ministry as pastor, Christian Education staff, or other full-time Christian service within the United Church of Christ.

These funds are restricted to those with membership in the UCC within this Conference and/or students-in-care with one of the associations of the Southeast Conference.

The composition of the committee is the Conference Minister, the Moderator of the Southeast Conference, the Finance Committee chairperson, and the Church and Ministry Commission Chair.

During this past year, scholarships were awarded to: David Torbett, Andover-Newton Theological School; Joe Hoffman, Candler School of Theology (twice); and Marcia Graham, Eden Theological Seminary (twice).

Applications and guidelines for funds are available through the Southeast Conference Office.

In addition, these funds have provided services to Student-in-Care and pastors in crisis or transition through the very valuable professional services of the Southeast Career Counseling Center, located on the campus of Columbia Seminary and sponsored by the Presbyterian church, Dr. Robert Urie, Director. The Commission is grateful for this and other services available for clergy and students, and is grateful to the Ensminger family and others who provided such funds in previous generations.

Respectfully submitted,  
Michael Small, Roger Knight, Roy Bain and Barbara Everett.

## **A Heartfelt Thanks to All: VISIONS '91**

### **THE GIFT**

**God made the sun—it gives  
God made the moon—it gives  
God made the stars—they give  
God made the clouds—they give  
God made the sea—it gives  
God made the trees—they give  
God made the fowl—they give  
God made the flowers—they give  
God made the beasts—they give  
God gave us a Son—God gives  
God made us: We give**

To each of you who gave and is giving to VISIONS '91—a heartfelt thanks for your participation, support and gift(s). Because of you, we now have pledges totaling—\$183,800 in commitments. These are commitments to the United Church of Christ and to the Southeast Conference which expresses a confidence previously unknown. We now have received \$108,126 in new monies to do some desperately needed programs, because of your support. Because of you, we now have an increased faith in ourselves, our church and in our future.

What are some of the gifts from this financial campaign that we can all enjoy? Hope, joy, enthusiasm, excitement, suspense, involvement, youth participation, wonder, sharing, anticipation, and accomplishment.

And there is more to come. A few pastors and churches which could not contribute, have faithfully promised to do—and we count on their integrity.

On behalf of the VISIONS '91 Campaign Committee and our Conference Minister, Roger Knight, once again I thank you and look forward to the implementation of the programs projected.

Dr. Erna Bryant, Chair

Ms. June Davis, Ren Manning, Floyd Carmack, Ms. Lala Allen, Richard Sales, James Mason, Richard Woodward, Roy Bain, and Barbara Everett

*From Roger Knight: AMEN to the venture by so many. I would personally ask those who have not participate in VISIONS—or any who could do a “second mile”—to be on board as we move into the future by MAKING YOUR COMMITMENT and GIFT. Let us not only meet the Challenge Goal but also reach the \$200,000 Endowment goal, then we will receive a matching \$50,000 Endowment from the wider UCC—a tremendous gesture of confidence and support. Won't you prayerfully consider this matter! (Envelopes are available in the Conference Office.) Thank you again, friends.*

## **Positive Evaluation of Conference Minister: Personnel Committee**

Our agenda is to oversee personnel matters, and work especially with the Conference Minister in the administering of the policies. During this year there has been unexpected turnover in the committee which affected some of its functioning. Personnel policies and position descriptions were developed in prior years.

This year included the following:

1. Evaluation of the Conference Minister, at his request, during mid-1991, as Roger approached the conclusion of year three with us. We thank churches and clergy for feedback in what was a helpful and positive exercise. The public summary of the evaluation is:

The personnel committee would like to thank all of the people who responded to our survey regarding Roger's performance. We had over a 25% response rate, which is very good for a survey with such a short response time. Overall, people responded that Roger was fulfilling their expectations both in terms

of time and quality. In fact, nearly +85% of the responses were that Roger met or exceeded their expectations. An additional 3% said that Roger exceeded their expectations, but indicated that he really devoted too much time to some areas. Fewer than 12% responded that Roger was falling below their expectations. There were frequent comments that Roger works too hard and needs to slow down. We have advised Roger that he should take these comments seriously, especially with respect to the example he is setting for his staff. We have also recommended that the next personnel committee review Roger's performance with him again in six months to discuss how he is progressing.

2. Under Roger's direction all personnel prepared goal and project sheets for 1992, which were shared with the Board of Directors as the basis for staff reports at meetings.

3. The decision recommended by the Personnel, Finance and Executive committees to maintain 1992 salaries at 1991 level, with review at mid-year in light of financial conditions, was difficult and not desirable. Encouragement and support of our capable staff with incentive, is important. Few in number but highly productive is a motto to describe them as they serve us so very ably.

Those serving on or with the committee during the year: Paul Johnson, Richard Woodward, Roger Jones, Franklin Thomas, Libby Scott and Jim Norris.

## **Conference Center Options Considered: Location Committee**

Purpose: to locate new facilities for our Conference offices.

We have had several meetings as a whole committee, and then numerous sub-group meetings. First we explored options; then we concentrated energy, hopes and resources on the Center Congregational Church property (the congregation became inactive in 1966 and the building has been leased to other religious groups since then); and now are still looking at other options.

The desire is to have a Conference Center for resourcing churches and their leaders, with Conference administrative offices; thus the program resources, historical records and mementoes of the Southeast churches and activities, and training space will be the major function. Flexible utilization of space, and knowing that this is "Our Southeast Conference Home," accessible and visible, is our long hoped for dream to be made real now.

The Southeast Conference has long been housed in Central Congregational United Church of Christ of Atlanta facilities, for which we all are indebted.

Some options we explored: other properties near Central Church; Fayetteville and Peachtree City office areas; office space with another denomination in downtown Atlanta; RTC properties (government sales); and Center Church. We are continuing our explorations for the right property.

We had hoped to be in Center Church by January, 1992. In fact, we have had it inspected, and Dick Harper developed plans for the renovation and relocation. To date, arrangements have not been consummated; the major forces

will be our re-establishing a new congregation there; and our Committee rejects spending Conference funds for renovation, etc., unwisely. (How grateful we are that VISIONS '91 provides some basic monies—Goal 4!)

Fortunately we have a little breathing space in which we will continue to work at the Location matter. It had fully been our intention to have the Conference offices and resources in a new facility by this Annual Meeting; we are sorry this has not worked out yet but we are confident that with all of our efforts God will guide us to find out new Conference home.

Please feel free to contact any of us, ask questions or give advice, offer assistance or become involved. This task is important for all of our future.

Floyd Carmack, Chair, Trinity, Jonesboro  
Cynthia Montgomery, Rush, Atlanta; Dr. David Noble, Central, Atlanta;  
Richard Harper, Pilgrimage, Marietta; Charlotte Morgan, Gwinnett Community,  
Lilburn; Roger Knight, staff.

## **Program Year Changed to Start in January**

The purpose of this Committee is to coordinate the plans for the commissions and enfold or oversee other program opportunities that do not quite fit under the commissions. My health situation did not allow me to function for all the meetings; I am grateful, however, for those who took over and carried on.

We usually try to coordinate the commissions' plans by meeting in conjunction with the Board of Directors; when all are in attendance, this is helpful.

In January the commissions met for planning together. Out of that meeting some important recommendations resulted:

1. To change the date of the program year to January-December, instead of June-June. This means the new commission chairpersons will, upon election to the Board of Directors in June, not assume the chair of the commission until January; they will be sitting on the Board of Directors immediately, however. The new chair will be an "apprentice" through the rest of the year as planning for the next year is done under the present chairperson's leadership. This will give continuity to the program bodies.

2. An Annual orientation and planning weekend will be held for all commission (and association committee) members; this will be after the association meetings so that all members can attend. (This year the planning will be either Nov. 6-7 or 13-14.)

3. There was emphasis put on the importance of persons elected knowing what their task is and then being able to be counted on to carry through. (This was conveyed to the Nominating Committee.)

4. Each program body to take responsibility for its own meeting arrangements: organizing, set-up, contacts, etc. in order to develop ownership and use of office resources advantageously. Staff to consult with all groups' organization.

5. Recommendations for projects under VISIONS were developed for the Board of Directors, and how the monies are to be spent.

I should also bring up other programs:

1. The United Church Board for World Ministries held its 182nd meeting in the Southeast Conference, the first time ever. From all reports it was a very good meeting. We thank Joyce Myers-Brown and all the other committee people and helpers who make this so valuable. Our churches had a first-hand acquaintance with our missions and people.

2. Iowa Exchange. We have not really gotten this off the ground, except there are some church exchanges, and other developments are planned. We had Dr. David Ray, Iowa staff member and small church specialist, to lead a workshop and keynote our East Alabama Association meeting; and I understand the Iowa Conference Minister, Donald Gall, will keynote the Georgia-South Carolina Association meeting this fall.

3. National Health Care Workshop in Winston-Salem, N.C., in February.

4. There are lots of programs that come to the Conference office from our national UCC offices and ecumenical sources that “don’t always fit.”

5. May 28-31 “Tales of the Heart”—a Global Education Training Event at Simpsonwood near Atlanta.

## **35 People Attended Last General Synod**

The Southeast Conference had about 35 members in attendance at General Synod, 1991, in Norfolk, VA. Delegates were Ms. Rebecca Paschal of Atlanta First, Rev. Marvin Morgan of Atlanta UCC, Ms. Nancy Sales of Birmingham Pilgrim, and Harry Manon of Pleasant Hill, TN (as Alternate replacement for Wayde Washburn); associate delegates, non-voting, were Board chairperson Roy Bain and Conference Minister Roger Knight.

Altogether there were about 700 delegates, 150 associate delegates and over 1,200 visitors. At our 7 a.m. daily caucus we reviewed the agenda, became informed on particular issues by resource persons, and shared experiences. A special noon lunch with the Iowa Conference, our Mission Partner conference, was a delightful and special occasion. Delegates are available to interpret the General Synod.

General Synod 19 will be July 15-21, 1993, in St. Louis in conjunction with the Christian Church/Disciples of Christ General Assembly. Both separate and joint sessions will be scheduled. We are planning to be housed in conjunction with the Iowa Conference, and have orientation sessions together.

SEC persons elected or appointed to national instrumentality positions are: Ms. Cynthia Tucker, Office for Church in Society; Jennifer Sterner and Alexis Reeves, United Church Board for World Ministries; Richard Braun, United Church Board for Home Ministries; and Barbara Everett and Roger Knight, Executive Council.

Nominations for SEC representation on national boards and instrumentalities are submitted by our Nominating Committee in the fall 1992. Advance materials for General Synod are received in the spring 1993; our delegates will meet in preparation at that time.

## **Preserving Our Story For Later Generations: Heritage Committee**

It is of the nature of Christianity to generate documents. Christians have a story to tell. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God ... And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth ..." (John 1:1, 14a)

The story of the mission and ministry of the United Church of Christ and its predecessor-related bodies in the Southeast is a part of this larger story. It is incumbent upon us that we gather and preserve this story, lest we forget whence we have come and whose we are.

Accepting this charge from the Conference, the members of the Heritage Committee gathered in Atlanta on March 19, and agreed to take the following actions:

1. to engage a professional archivist to examine the Conference office files and to suggest a plan for arrangement and proper care;
2. to expand and complete the files of individual churches to include all relevant information;
3. to initiate a program of oral histories among its members in order to preserve our living memories; and
4. to identify what records are being preserved in denominational and university archives that relate to our mission and ministry in the Southeast.

Anita Delaries of Alpharetta, GA has accepted the committee's invitation to act as a consultant to draw up a records management plan for the Conference office, and individual committee members have accepted specific tasks to be performed. Our inaugural meeting was a joy to attend and was most productive.

We invite interested persons to contact us; there is an open invitation to attend our meetings.

Respectfully submitted,  
Channing Jeschke and Frances Smith, Co-Chairs  
Kathryn Childers, Idella Childs, (others attending) Ed Brown, Henry Weaver, and  
Roger Knight

## **Welcome to the Annual Meeting**

We extend the heartiest invitation to the 26th Annual Meeting to be held in First Congregational Church, UCC, Atlanta and the Ramada Inn nearby.

Preparations have been underway all year, in what we hope will be an enriching experience for all.

Our theme, "Behold! I Am Doing A New Thing!" from Isaiah was also the theme of the last General Synod. Our subtheme, "The Church in the South" describes our Conference life and calling. We are fortunate to have Professor Walter Brueggemann and Dr. Shelby Rooks to lead us in our theme presentations. (A Bible study on the theme will be distributed at the Annual Meeting.)

I want to thank all the people who are part of the planning and presentation. The Program Committee, under Jerry Gladson, secured the leaders; Dwight Andrews' group is planning worship and music, including a large festive worship and choir on Friday evening (let's fill up First Church!); Local Arrangements Committee under Essie Holman is planning for all the hospitality and arrangements; and Frances Smith has been on top of all the planning of so many details. Other matters such as Board of Directors, Hearings, Forums, Luncheon Banquet, Nominations, Displays, etc., are all part of the planning.

Send or bring your church banner by 3 p.m. Friday for hanging in First Church.

See you at the Annual Meeting.

William Jackson, Annual Meeting Chairperson  
Shirley Tucker, Jerry Gladson, Tony Healy, Charlotte Harnsberry, Bill Jenkins,  
Essie Holman, Bettye Thomas, and Lester Ariail

## **Who Can Attend the Annual Meeting**

The Annual Meeting is open to everyone. However, only certain people can vote in the plenary business sessions which decide on officers, budget, and resolutions. Voting persons are delegates elected from churches, all ordained clergy, licensed and commissioned ministers; and members of the Board of Directors. Each church up to 100 members is entitled to a minimum of two delegates. One additional delegate is awarded for every 100 members over the first 100 members. Membership of churches is determined by Yearbook reports filed with the Conference office.

## **Registration for Annual Meeting**

You can register for the Annual Meeting in two ways:

Most delegates register for the full event. Cost is \$43.00, and includes all annual meeting materials as well as meals from Friday evening through Sunday breakfast.

Many visitors register for Saturday only. The cost is \$23.00 and includes only the Saturday Banquet Luncheon.

For information on registration, call Ms. Leslie Cox at Pilgrimage United Church of Christ at (404) 971-0007, or write her at 3755 Sandy Plains Road, Marietta, GA 30066.

Registrations should indicate whether persons attending is an elected delegate (ordained or lay), or a visitor.



## **Hotel Space at the Ramada Inn**

Hotel reservations with the downtown Ramada Hotel should be made by May 22 to guarantee a room and the room rate. The cost is \$55.00 per night per room, with up to 4 people per room allowed.

For reservations, please call the Ramada Downtown, 175 Piedmont Drive, at 1-800-272-6232, and identify that you are with the Southeast Conference group.

As well as prepaid meals for those registered for the Annual Meeting, there are dining facilities at the hotel.

Some parts of the meeting will be held at the Ramada, with other portions held at First Congregational. Check your schedule to be certain where you should be.

## **Parking Available at Church**

Located one block south on Piedmont from the Ramada Hotel, First Congregational Church has adequate parking behind the church and across the street at the Firestone Store (evenings and weekends).

Parking on Friday evening will be supervised. Parking at the Ramada Hotel is secured, and is free to guests.

## **Directions to Church**

To reach the church, exit at International Boulevard traveling north on the Interstate 75/85 Downtown Connector and turn south on Courtland Street. Traveling south on the Connector, exit at Courtland.

From International turn south on Courtland. Head south on one-way Courtland Street to the corner of Houston Avenue where the church is located.

The Ramada is located one block north on Piedmont, which is a one-way street.

## **Worship on Sunday Morning**

The Annual Meeting will not have its own worship service on Sunday morning, but will adjourn for worship services in eight other United Church of Christ churches around Atlanta.

First Congregational Church, where the Annual Meeting will be held, holds services at 11 a.m. The Rev. George Thomas is pastor.

Central Congregational United Church of Christ, 2676 Clairmont Road, will hold services at 9:15 and 11 a.m. that Sunday. Take Interstate 85 North, exit at Clairmont Road, turn south and travel south past a small shopping center. The church is in the woods to the right. The Rev. Steve Sterner is pastor.

Rush Memorial Congregational Church, UCC, is located at 150 James P. Brawley Drive. Services are at 11 a.m. Travel south on Courtland Street, to Martin Luther King Drive, and turn right. Brawley Drive is on the right past Atlanta University. Larry Calbert is pastor.

Atlanta United Church of Christ is located at 572 Lawton Street S.W. Services are at 11 a.m. To reach the church, travel south on the Downtown Connector and exit on Interstate 20. Exit I-20 at Ashby Street, and go west one block to Lucille Street. Turn left on Lucille Street to Lawton Street. The Rev. Marvin Morgan is pastor.

Gwinnett Community Church, UCC, is located at 869 Cole Drive in Gwinnett County. Services are at 10:30 a.m. To reach the church, take Interstate 85 North past Interstate 285. Exit at Indian Trail and take Indian Trail/Killian Hill Road east. Turn right at Arcado Road after crossing U.S. 29. Turn left off Arcado onto Cole Drive. The Rev. Jerry O'Connor is pastor.

Pilgrimage United Church of Christ is located at 3755 Sandy Plains Road in Cobb County. Services are at 10:30 a.m. Take Interstate 75 North past Interstate 285. Exit at 114A, and go to the first light and turn right onto Sandy Plains. The church is four miles later, located after Shallowford Road on the left. The Rev. Tim Morrison is pastor.

Trinity United Church is located on Tara Boulevard, south of Jonesboro in Clayton County. Services are at 11 am. Take Interstate 75 South and exit Highway 19/41 after Interstate 285 (and not before). Travel south on Tara Boulevard for several miles. The Rev. Floyd Carmack is pastor.

## **OCWM RECEIPTS FOR 1ST QUARTER 1992, MARCH 31, 1992**

<b>Churches</b>	<b>First</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>By Association</b>	<b>Quarter</b>	<b>Last Year</b>
<b>ALABAMA-TENNESSEE TOTAL</b>	<b>15,744.32</b>	<b>93,273.16</b>
Alpine, AL, King's Chapel	0.00	138.00
Athens, AL, Trinity	0.00	0.00
Belvidere, TN, First	332.48	6,310.09
Birmingham, AL, First	0.00	5,150.00
Birmingham, AL, Pilgrim	1,350.00	5,200.00
Chattanooga, TN, First	0.00	0.00
Chattanooga, TN, Pilgrim	2,580.84	21,385.50
Crossville, TN, United	1,175.50	3,776.50
Cullman, AL, St. John's	1,350.00	8,100.00
Deer Lodge, TN, Deer Lodge	300.00	1,200.00
Fairfield Glade, TN, Community	750.00	3,000.00
Garden City, AL, Garden City	115.50	462.00
Hanceville, AL, Mountain Grove	0.00	150.00
Huntsville, AL, United	2,250.00	8,400.00

Knoxville, TN, Church of the Savior	0.00	2,250.00
Marion, AL, First	0.00	50.00
Montgomery, AL, First	0.00	3,800.00
Nashville, TN, First	1,000.00	4,166.66
Nashville, TN, Brookmeade	0.00	25.00
Nashville, TN, Howard	0.00	500.00
Pleasant Hill, TN, Community	4,500.00	17,600.00
Robbins, TN, Barton Chapel	0.00	300.00
Sunbright, TN, Glenmary	0.00	800.00
Sweetwater, TN, First	0.00	250.00
Talladega, AL, First	0.00	100.00
Tougaloo, MS, Union	0.00	0.00
Waverly, TN, United	40.00	160.00
<b>EAST ALABAMA-WEST GEORGIA TOTAL</b>	<b>1,690.00</b>	<b>18,496.00</b>
Alexander City, AL, First	0.00	266.00
Columbus, GA, United	0.00	0.00
Dadeville, AL, Elder	0.00	539.00
East Tallassee, AL, East Tallassee	0.00	0.00
Eclectic, AL, Watson's Chapel	0.00	0.00
Five Points, AL, State Line	0.00	47.00
LaFayette, AL, Pleasant Grove	177.00	1,155.00
LaGrange, GA, Hillside	0.00	0.00
LaGrange, GA, United	484.00	2,080.00
Lanett, AL, Lanett	0.00	4,418.00
Langdale, AL, Langdale	164.00	428.00
Phenix City, AL, Russell Woods	285.00	1,425.00
Pine Mountain, GA, Oak Grove	0.00	1,722.00
Roanoke, AL, Antioch	0.00	714.00
Roanoke, AL, Bethany	0.00	0.00
Roanoke, AL, First	0.00	712.00
Roanoke, AL, Forest Home	24.00	0.00
Roanoke, AL, New Hope	0.00	570.00
Roanoke, AL, North Main	0.00	429.00
Roanoke, AL, Rock Stand	175.00	350.00
Valley, AL, Pine Forest	0.00	1,064.00
Valley, AL, Todd	0.00	0.00
Wadley, AL, Corinth	0.00	357.00
Wedowee, AL, Noon Day	0.00	0.00
Woodbury, GA, Jones Chapel	380.00	2,220.00
<b>SOUTH ALABAMA-NW FLORIDA TOTAL</b>	<b>1,010.00</b>	<b>1,100.00</b>
Andalusia, AL, Antioch	400.00	0.00
Andalusia, AL, First	610.00	550.00
Baker, FL, Good Hope	0.00	0.00
Baker, FL, Pyron	0.00	300.00

Bonifay, FL, New Effort	0.00	0.00
Brantley, AL, Indian Creek	0.00	0.00
Brantley, AL, Liberty	0.00	0.00
Clio, AL, New Hope	0.00	0.00
Headland, AL, Blackwood	0.00	250.00
<b>GEORGIA-SOUTH CAROLINA TOTAL</b>		
Atlanta, GA, Carroll Heights	0.00	0.00
Atlanta, GA, Central	8,400.00	32,200.00
Atlanta, GA, First	0.00	11,000.00
Atlanta, GA, Rush	0.00	0.00
Atlanta, GA, Southwest	0.00	0.00
Atlanta, GA, UCC	0.00	0.00
Barnesville, GA, Fredonia	0.00	0.00
Beachton, GA, Evergreen	0.00	495.00
Braselton, GA, Macedonia	0.00	0.00
Buford, GA, Duncan's Creek	0.00	0.00
Charleston, SC, Circular	0.00	4,666.70
Charleston, SC, Plymouth	0.00	1,160.00
Columbia, SC, Pilgrim	0.00	0.00
Demorest, GA, Federated	0.00	453.91
Dewy Rose, GA, Liberty	0.00	400.00
Jonesboro, GA, Trinity	1,100.00	6,000.00
Lilburn, GA, Button Gwinnett	300.00	500.00
Macon, GA, First	0.00	0.00
Marietta, GA, Pilgrimage	458.34	2,500.00
Midway, GA, Midway	200.00	600.00
Savannah, GA, First	0.00	1,200.00
Thomasville, GA, Bethany	0.00	300.00

## **Board Looks at National UCC Campaign**

Meeting March 27-28 in Atlanta, the Board of Directors of the Southeast Conference authorized preliminary participation in the UCC "Make A Difference" Campaign that begins in churches next year.

In its decision, the Board decided to maintain emphasis this year on the VISIONS '91 campaign, and delay full presentation until next year on the \$30 million national campaign.

In a separate decision, the Board also agreed to give a gift of about \$500 to the Matching Funds Endowment, which is raised by conferences and used to match endowment campaigns in conferences.

The Conference will be a beneficiary of a \$50,000 matching gift if the total for the Conference endowment reaches \$50,000 in the VISIONS '91 campaign. Currently, the Conference endowment is about \$14,000 short of that goal.

In light of the decision in a previous Board meeting to accept the recommendation of the Program Committee to change the program year to January to December, the Board decided to continue to seat Board members after the Annual Meeting.

The Board approved several appointments by Moderator Roy Bain. These included Barbara Voss and Ariel Ford to the Personnel Committee, and Sandye Mullins, James Myers and Herb Young to the Identity Task Force.

## **CHURCH AND PEOPLE NOTES**

The Rev. George Fidler, during those 24-year tenure at St. John's United Church of Christ in Cullman, AL, the congregation was transformed from barely 100 people to nearly 1,100 members today, has announced his intention to retire at the end of the year.

The northern Alabama church has begun a search process in cooperation with the Conference. Rev. Fidler plans to devote his time after retirement to interim ministries.

At the same time, Steve Nyquist, an associate pastor and a non-UCC ordinand, has resigned his position at the church.

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CAPITAL WORK: Central Congregational United Church of Christ, Atlanta, GA, has raised an initial \$480,000 in its \$570,000 three-year challenge campaign.

Funds from the campaign will go toward renovation and expansion of present facilities, including more parking and site improvement, as well as renovating its old parish as a community center.

A portion of the funds also was designated for community projects, including \$10,000 for the Martin Street Literacy Program and \$10,000 for the Christian Council of Atlanta.

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WISCONSIN MOUNTAIN HIGH: Seventeen youth and seven adults have signed up to attend the UCC National Youth Event from the Southeast Conference this summer.

The event, whose theme is "Shout It From the Mountaintop," will be held on July 9-13 in Beloit, WI. Charlotte Harnsberry of First Congregational Church, UCC, of Birmingham, AL, is part of the National Planning Committee.

Youth attending are: Alicia Barnes, Pilgrim, Chattanooga, TN; Jennifer Decker, Anna Sales, Corbett Leibler, Paul Linder, all of Pilgrimage, Marietta, GA; John Sewell, Aisha Houston, Joell Bailey, Danielle Larkin, Nathaniel Dunn and Rashidah Johnson, all of First, Birmingham; Dzauya Nkuchwayo, Central, Atlanta;

Amanda Bell, Ken Lavender, Johnny Owen, Jake Phillips, and Nicole Newnez, all of Pilgrim, Birmingham.

Adults attending are: Nancy Barnes, Chattanooga; Dr. Elvin Harnsberry, Kevin Harnsberry and Charlotte Harnsberry, all of First, Birmingham; Joe and Terri Hoffman, Central, Atlanta; and Roger Knight, Conference Minister.

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HELPING YOUTH: The Rev. Andrew Frierson, pastor of First United Church of Sweetwater, TN, has been named Executive Director of Project Help in Sweetwater.

A component of the Drug-Free Tennessee Abuse Education Program, Project Help concentrates on long-term prevention and intervention of alcohol and drug use by youth between ages 10 to 15.

A former school administrator in Chattanooga, TN, Rev. Frierson was called as pastor at Sweetwater in 1990.

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LOOKING GOOD: Pilgrim Congregational Church, UCC, of Chattanooga, TN, has published a slick new church brochure. Helping with it were Margha Davis, Liz Klinefelter, Nancy Gannon, Dale Mabee, Dottie Page and Pastor James Smalley.

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CHURCH NOTES: United Christian Church of Crossville, TN, is beginning the process of locating a site for a new church facility ... Brookmeade Congregational Church, UCC, of Nashville, TN, held its annual three-day Spring Fling flea market on May 2 ... On the same day, the men of Lanett Congregational Christian Church in Lanett, AL, sold barbecue chicken plates ... That weekend was the spring camping outing for Circular Congregational Church, UCC, Charleston, SC, at Pisgah National Forest (but they missed the snow storm) ... Fairfield Glade Community Church, Fairfield Glade, TN, is embarking on small group experiences for prayer, Bible study, discussion and sharing ... United Church of Huntsville, AL, took in a record \$1,202.48 in the One Great Hour of Sharing.

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HOLY WEEK: First United Church, Nashville, TN, held an Easter sunrise service on the front lawn of the church at 6:15 a.m. .... The three Nashville UCC churches held a joint communion at Howard Congregational Church, UCC, on Maundy Thursday ... Also holding sunrise services was United Congregational Christian Church of LaGrange, GA, a pancake breakfast ... Church of the Savior,

UCC, Knoxville, TN, held a Maundy Thursday Passover Seder Service ... Pleasant Hill Community Church, UCC, of Pleasant Hill, TN, held an Easter Dawn service ... Rev. Michael Small of First United Church of Christ, Belvidere, TN, and President of the Franklin County Ministerial Association helped lead a community Good Friday service at First Baptist Church, Winchester, TN.

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CHRISTMAS CENTENNIAL: There was no way to forget what day to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Corinth Christian Church in Wadley, AL—it's on Christmas. Established on Dec. 25, 1891, the church held an informal service on Christmas Day to celebrate the anniversary, and a celebration on Dec. 29 to mark the occasion with former pastors, members and friends. The event included a history reading and memorabilia from the church's past.

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120 YEARS: King's Chapel Congregational Church of Alpine, AL, marked its 120th anniversary on April 12. Founded by the American Missionary Association in 1872, the church once ran the only school for African-Americans in its area. The church has been served by 16 pastors, and is currently in its third church building.

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DEATHS: Two leading members of Howard Congregational Church, UCC, Nashville, TN, have died. Richard H. Harris, Sr., a former school principal, died Feb. 2, and Walter W. Hadley, Jr., a trustee emeritus, died Jan. 8 ... Powell Blair, a member of the Church Council at St. John's United Church of Christ in Cullman, AL, died April 22.

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NEW MINISTRY: The Rev. Dwight Andrews, a member of the Music Department staff at Emory University, has been called as part-time associate pastor at First Congregational Church, UCC, in Atlanta ... Arthur Dailey of Lanett will serve First Congregational Christian Church, Alexander City, AL ... The Rev. Milton Hurst has been called as pastor of First Congregational Church, UCC, Talladega, AL, following the resignation of Clarence Trescott, a non-UCC pastor ... A retired minister, the Rev. Lamar Kincaid, has been called as assistant pastor at First Congregational Church, UCC, of Savannah, GA, in an effort to build an interracial church.

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MINISTERIAL NOTES: Dr. David Naglee of LaGrange was honored at a reception at LaGrange College on May 13 for the publication of his two volumes on John Wesley ... First United Church of Christ, Belvidere, TN, held a farewell for its pastor, Michael Small, who has been called to a church in Hackensack, MN ... the Rev. James Norris, United Church of Huntsville, AL, begins a 10-week sabbatical in June.

## **THE SOUTHEAST NEWS**

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PROJECT

